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Father Damien is recognized for his 16 years of selfless service to the people who were forcibly isolated on the peninsula of Kalaupapa, on the island of Molokai, Hawaii, because they were diagnosed with Hansen's disease. Living among the people of Kalaupapa from 1873 to 1889, he eventually contracted the disease, ultimately died from its effects, and was buried on Molokai.

The policy of exiling persons with the disease that was then known as leprosy began under the Kingdom of Hawaii and continued under the governments of the Republic of Hawaii, the Territory of Hawaii and the State of Hawaii. Children, mothers and fathers were forcibly separated and sent to Kalaupapa, which for most of its history could only be accessed by water or via a steep mule trail. Children born to parents at Kalaupapa were taken away from their mothers and sent to orphanages or to other family members outside Kalaupapa. Hawaii's isolation laws for people with Hansen's disease were not repealed until 1969, even though medications to control the disease have been available since the late 1940s.

I believe that all people, regardless of their religious beliefs, can recognize truly extraordinary persons who give of themselves without reserve for the betterment of their fellow human beings. Father Damien was surely such a person. No sickness was as feared as leprosy in the late 1800s, but he volunteered to serve at Kalaupapa and requested to stay there in order to serve those who were most shunned. He recognized the human rights and inherent dignity of all people, especially those he lived alongside at Kalaupapa.

Father Damien worked with the people of Kalaupapa to improve their living conditions. A skilled carpenter, he led in the building of houses and hospitals, six chapels, a home for boys and a home for girls. At the same time, he ministered to the spiritual and physical needs of his parishioners and helped to bury the hundreds who died during his years there.

It is noteworthy that shortly after Hawaii became a State, Father Damien was the first selection of the State legislature to be memorialized in a statue as part of the National Statuary Hall in Washington, DC. Despite the fact that he was not born in Hawaii and lived so long ago, Hawaii's people recognize that his life embodied the true spirit of aloha, which means, love, compassion, mercy, grace, and malama, which means to care for.

Last week in Louvain, Belgium, prior to the canonization, some 400 Hawaii residents, including 11 former Hansen's disease patients from Kalaupapa, attended a mass with the King and Queen of Belgium near St. Damien's birthplace. Addressing those who came all the way from Hawaii, Cardinal Daele, a native of Belgium said, "We gave life to Father Damien. You gave him back as a saint. We thank you."

I have visited Father Damien's grave at Kalawao on the Kalaupapa peninsula, and as you can see by this photo that was taken when I visited Kalaupapa, it seems almost unreal. It is a beautiful place where tremendous suffering took place, but also a place imbued with great spiritual feeling. Father Damien's grave site is marked on this photo in the far left.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. HIRONO. I hope that you will have the opportunity to visit Kalaupapa at some point in your lives. I know that you will be deeply moved, as I was, by the example of this man, this saint, as well as by the courage and perseverance of the people he dedicated his life to serving.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, we have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of our time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I would like to ask just a couple more minutes to say I want to share with my colleagues another beautiful story, a legacy of Father Damien. This is a story about a native Hawaiian leader by the name of Jonathan Napela. And when this Hawaiian leader found out that his wife had contracted Hansen's disease, he went with her to Kalaupapa, lived with her throughout the rest of his life, and he also contracted Hansen's disease because of the love that he had for his wife, and they lived there, working with Father Damien and other leaders there in this little community of Kalaupapa.

And I just wanted to note that for the RECORD. This famous native Hawaiian leader by the name of Jonathan Napela also was a beautiful story of how much he was able to help the community there in Kalaupapa and the island of Molokai.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H. Res. 786 in commemorating the canonization of Father Damien de Veuster to sainthood.

The canonization of Father Damien completes his ascension to sainthood and gives universal veneration to a life of extraordinary commitment, charity, and faith. It has been more than 120 years since his death on the Kalaupapa Peninsula on the island of Molokai, but Father Damien's life continues to illuminate for all humankind the pathway of service to the needy.

Father Damien's mission in life and the journey he took to fulfill it were inspired by a simple yet profound compassion, to recognize the human rights and dignity of every individual, particularly those who were cast aside to Kalaupapa. He challenged the orthodoxies of his own church and the government to provide the needed resources to care for Hansen's disease patients who had been banished to Kalaupapa—attracting worldwide attention to his demonstration of humanity.

He lived, worked, and died in geographic isolation with the people he cared for, but his timeless teachings and inspiration have reached a vast congregation that reaches

around the world without regard to time and place. Father Damien's hope and devotion continue to strengthen all of us today, and his sainthood affirms this for eternity.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and Father Damien's work and legacy, a timeless example of compassion and dedication.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 786, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

CELEBRATING 90 YEARS OF UNITED STATES-POLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 266) celebrating 90 years of United States-Polish diplomatic relations, during which Poland has proven to be an exceptionally strong partner to the United States in advancing freedom around the world, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 266

Whereas the United States established diplomatic relations with the newly independent Second Polish Republic in April 1919;

Whereas the year 2009 marks the 20th anniversary of the fall of communism in Poland, as well as the restoration of democracy and market economy in that country;

Whereas the year 2009 marks the 10th anniversary of Poland's accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO);

Whereas the year 2009 marks the 5th anniversary of Poland's accession to the European Union (EU);

Whereas the year 2009 marks the 50th anniversary of the Fulbright Educational Exchange Program in Poland;

Whereas Poland has overcome a legacy of foreign occupation and period of communist rule to emerge as a free and democratic nation;

Whereas Poland is a valued partner in the fight against global terrorism and has contributed troops to the stabilization and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq; and

Whereas Poland has cooperated closely with the United States on issues such as democratization, nuclear nonproliferation, human rights, regional cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe, and reform of the United Nations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) celebrates the 90th anniversary of United States-Polish diplomatic relations;

(2) congratulates the Polish people on their great accomplishments as a free democracy; and

(3) expresses appreciation for Poland's steadfast partnership with the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The gentleman from American Samoa is recognized.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from American Samoa?

There was no objection.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am in strong support of House Resolution 266, which celebrates 90 years of diplomatic relations between the United States and Poland. I wish to thank my good friend, the distinguished gentleman from the State of Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) for his authorship and introduction of this bill that enables the House to join the Senate in marking this significant anniversary and reaffirming our friendship with an important ally.

It is remarkable to think that it has been only 20 years since Poland began to emerge from a period marked by war, Communist rule and occupation. On June 4, 1989, the good people of Poland voted in semi-democratic parliamentary elections. They resulted in a landslide victory for opposition candidates fielded by the Solidarity trade union over the ruling Communists. The new government moved swiftly to reestablish democratic practices and a free market economy.

This election marked a turning point in the region, as other Soviet satellite states in Central and Eastern Europe regained their freedom by the end of 1989. Poland undertook internal reforms that enabled its rapid integration into the Euro-Atlantic community. Indeed, 2009 marks the fifth anniversary of Poland's membership with the European Union and the 10th anniversary of its accession to NATO. Poland has since been playing an active role in the international community, helping to secure peace and stability through its contributions to civilian and military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In addition, Poland has been a strong ally of the United States. This year we are marking 90 years of diplomatic relations, with the United States being the first country to recognize the newly independent Second Polish Republic in January 1919. This was par-

ticularly fitting given the key role played by President Woodrow Wilson in demanding that an independent Poland be included in the Treaty of Versailles.

Since that time, there has continued to be a close friendship between our two peoples and countries. The estimated 10 million of our fellow Polish Americans who comprise 3 percent of the U.S. population have made considerable contributions to the cultural, economic, social, and political fabric of our great Nation. I welcome the planned visit by Vice President BIDEN to Poland later this month, as it provides an excellent opportunity to affirm our strong bilateral relationship.

I strongly support this resolution and urge my colleagues to do the same.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 266, which celebrates 90 years of U.S.-Polish diplomatic relations and the fact that Poland has proven to be a strong partner for the United States in advancing freedom around the world.

Poland has come a long way since throwing off the yoke of Communism 20 years ago. In fact, it was only 2 months ago that Poles celebrated the 20th anniversary of the first free and democratic parliamentary elections in their country, held in 1989, which followed decades of Communist rule and Soviet domination of Poland. The election, in fact, helped provide the inspiration for the peoples of other Central and Eastern European nations to subsequently free themselves from the shackles of the Communist regimes in their countries.

Today, Poland is a free and democratic country and a full and valued member of a number of international organizations, including the European Union and NATO. Through NATO, Poland is a full ally of the United States and, in that role, has significantly contributed to the United States-led efforts to fight global terrorism.

This resolution, Mr. Speaker, celebrates the 90th anniversary of the U.S.-Polish diplomatic relations. It congratulates the Polish people on their great accomplishments as a great democracy, and it expresses appreciation for Poland's partnership with the United States.

Given the specific intent of the resolution before us today dealing with the importance of our relationship with our ally, Poland, I would like to comment on the recent decision by President Obama to cancel the long-range missile defense project with Poland. We could debate the recent decision to cancel the long-range missile defense project in Poland, a decision with which many of us, obviously, disagree. In light of the history of Eastern Europe over the past century, and of Poland, in particular, we should exercise care in the ways that we arrive at decisions that have great consequence to our allies in that region.

In this instance, the decision to cancel the missile defense project was communicated to Polish officials only the night before it was announced. The decision was also announced on the 70th anniversary of the invasion of the Soviet Union of Poland in 1939. What an insult. In light of the timing of the decision, and given that Russian troops invaded Georgia last year, should we have been surprised when our Polish allies reacted with alarm at the suddenness of the announcement? I think not.

In short, Mr. Speaker, our relationship with Poland requires skillful handling and needs to take into account what Poland has experienced over the past 100 years in order to avoid sending unintended and potentially damaging messages to such a close ally.

Mr. Speaker, I support the resolution before us today.

I reserve the balance of our time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman, the author of this piece of legislation, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI).

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Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 266, celebrating 90 years of diplomatic relations between the United States and Poland and recognizing Poland's critical role in advancing freedom and democracy across the globe. We must never forget Lech Walesa's leadership inside Poland and the Polish pope, Pope John Paul II's leadership from the outside which helped lead to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the collapse of the wall separating the East and West and the freedom that that brought to so many hundreds of millions of people around the world.

As a Polish American, as the co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus on Poland, and as someone who represents part of the most Polish city outside of Poland, I'm especially proud to sponsor this resolution. I would like to thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for working with me on this resolution and on other important issues.

In addition to marking the 90th anniversary of U.S.-Poland diplomatic relations, this year also marks the 20th anniversary of the fall of communism in Poland, the 10th anniversary of Poland's accession to NATO, and the 5th anniversary of Poland's membership in the European Union.

Ninety years ago, there were already 150,000 Polish immigrants in and around Chicago. The Polish American Association recently noted that following World War II, "Polish Americans made up a large part of the countless families moving into Chicago suburbs, especially southwest suburbs such as Oak Lawn and Hickory Hills and western suburbs such as Berwyn and Lyons." These are all areas I represent, and such communities are one reason our countries are so close.

Poland's struggle against communism and its emergence as a free and democratic nation are a great chapter in the history of the 20th century. In recent years, Poland has strongly supported the United States diplomatically and militarily, helping to combat global terrorism and contributing troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution and in conveying America's thanks to the Polish people. Poland has been one of our Nation's best friends and strongest allies. We must honor this relationship and make sure that we work to continue it and work to strengthen that relationship with great respect.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS), a member of the Armed Services and Judiciary Committees and the co-Chair of the House Missile Defense Caucus.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. I thank the gentlelady, as always.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege for me to stand here today in strong, wholehearted support of our cherished ally, the nation of Poland, and in strong support of House Resolution 266. And I want to thank Mr. LIPINSKI, a cherished friend of mine, for his willingness to put forth this resolution.

After the recently announced decision by the Obama administration abandoning our promised missile defense interceptors in Poland, our allies' newspaper headlines stated the situation in rather stark terms, Mr. Speaker. One Polish newspaper had the headline, "Betrayed! The USA has sold us to the Russians and stabbed us in the back."

Now, Mr. Speaker, it's a travesty beyond words that the United States of America, the bastion of freedom throughout the entire world, would give reason to a loyal ally like Poland to write headlines like that. Poland has strongly supported the United States diplomatically and militarily and has joined with us courageously in combating global terrorism and has contributed troops to the coalitions led by the United States of America both in Afghanistan and in Iraq.

For these reasons and so many others, Mr. Speaker, I'm honored to stand here today with my colleagues to warmly congratulate the Polish people on their remarkable accomplishments as a free nation and to express our gratitude for Poland's steadfast partnership with the United States and to affirm our clear and unwavering support for the free democratic nation of Poland.

Mr. Speaker, I would go one step further by stating that one of the best ways we could demonstrate our deep love and appreciation for the nation and people of Poland would be to prove that we mean this by extending the Visa Waiver Program to our Polish allies. We've already extended the Visa

Waiver Program to 35 other allies, including other European nations like Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia, and I strongly believe we should have extended this same courtesy to our allies in Poland long ago. Poland repealed its own visa requirement back in 1991 and allows Americans to travel throughout Poland without the use of a visa.

The nation of Poland has proven time and again, Mr. Speaker, its steadfast dedication to the cause of human freedom as well as its friendship with the United States, and it is appropriate that they understand that America is grateful. And I just reiterate my gratitude to Mr. LIPINSKI and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 1½ minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in wholehearted support of this resolution. I thank Representative LIPINSKI for his outstanding work that he has done to bring this resolution to the floor.

In 1919, the United States established diplomatic relations with the newly formed Polish Republic. After 90 years of diplomatic relations, our relations have never been stronger.

Over the last 90 years, the Polish people have overcome profound challenges, and Poland has emerged as a beacon for democracy and economic revitalization. In the 1980s, Polish workers rose against the Soviet elite, and despite significant oppression, forced democratic elections in 1989 and was a significant factor in the fall of the Iron Curtain. Despite the decades of Soviet control, over the last 20 years, the Polish economy has expanded dramatically and now is one of the economic engines of Europe.

Over the years, Poland has cooperated closely with the United States on issues such as democratization, nuclear proliferation, human rights, regional cooperation in Eastern Europe, and reform of the United Nations.

Today we can recognize these great contributions and reaffirm our commitment to our relationship with this great ally by voting in support of this resolution. I urge my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, to vote in support of House Resolution 266.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to also join in support of H. Res. 266, celebrating 90 years of diplomatic relations between the United States and the Polish Republic.

In those years, Poland has suffered invasion, and then the cruel domination of communism.

The religious faith and the courage of Poland's people carried them out of those dark years, and Poland today is a beacon of democracy to the rest of the world.

With an impressive history, Poland is also poised to be a leader of Europe's future.

I visited Poland with a group of other Members, so I have a firsthand sense of the hospitality of Poland, and also of Poland's commitment to freedom and national security.

I am very disappointed in President Obama's decision not to follow through with the placing of ground-based missile defense systems in Poland. In the United States House of Representatives and in the Senate, there are still many supporters of such a system.

I appreciate the serious debates and commitments Poland has made to be an ally of the United States on missile defense, and I will continue to urge full cooperation between the United States and Poland on this matter.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I have no further speakers and yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 266, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING THE 140TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 603) recognizing the 140th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 603

Whereas October 2, 2009, marks the 140th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi;

Whereas Mahatma Gandhi was a great political leader, devout and spiritual Hindu, and leader of India's nationalist movement;

Whereas all his life Gandhi courageously supported, and in fact gave his life for, the cause of Hindu Muslim amity;

Whereas Gandhi helped to make India the largest democracy in the world;

Whereas his philosophy of nonviolent civil disobedience has influenced people around the world for the betterment of mankind;

Whereas Gandhi developed the term *Satyagraha*, meaning vindication of truth, not by inflicting suffering on others but through nonviolent and patient self-suffering;

Whereas his autobiography "My Experiments with Truth" reveals the inner voice of one of history's most spiritual leaders;

Whereas Gandhi counseled humankind to "Hate the sin, and love the sinner", urged people everywhere to "be the change you want to see in the world", and reminded the world that "Freedom is not worth having if it does not connote the freedom to err"; and

Whereas as a result of his timeless legacy, Gandhi's name has come to symbolize freedom and justice around the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the 140th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi;

(2) acknowledges and commends Mahatma Gandhi's unique and lasting role in the establishment of the state of India and its